



NEWS RELEASE

STATE OF NEBRASKA

Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)
2433 N.W. 24th St., Lincoln, NE 68524-1801

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 21, 2014, 5:30 p.m.

CONTACT: Jodie Fawl, NEMA Public Information Officer, 402-326-3179, jodie.fawl@nebraska.gov

Gov. Heineman Surveys Storm Damage, Thanks Volunteers

Gov. Dave Heineman traveled by helicopter today to survey areas affected by recent storms. The trip included a survey of the Missouri river from Omaha to South Sioux City to view flooding in the area, and northeastern Nebraska, to see the damage caused by a tornado in the Coleridge and Wakefield area. Gov. Heineman then traveled to Pilger where he thanked volunteers for their assistance in helping those affected by Monday's tornado.

Updates from Pilger:

Damaged Vehicle Removal, Disposal Forms Available

Damaged vehicles in Pilger are becoming a hindrance to cleanup efforts. The Village Clerk has provided a form that all vehicle owners must complete before damaged vehicle can be removed.

The 'Consent, Release and Waiver' is a simple one-page form and is available at the check-in location and at the food pavilion in Pilger.

The form is to be used by the vehicle owner (including an insurance company who acquired ownership after settlement) to transfer the vehicle to the Village for removal and disposal at no cost to the owner and with no payment or consideration to be paid to the owner.

You must attach documents evidencing the title to this form.

For more information contact, **Mike Wight, Public Information Officer (402) 416-9389**, mike.wight@nebraska.gov

NEW CALL IN number For Pilger Recovery Efforts:

Beginning June 21, a CALL IN LINE will be in place to address all volunteer opportunities and donations. This number is 402-833-1515 and will be in operation from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily.

Flooding: National Weather Service Valley/Omaha

Substantial rains occurred across the Missouri River Basin last night, especially in the southern half of the Omaha metro. Major flooding was reported including reported rainfall of 7.75 inches in LaVista. Several flash flood warnings were issued to alert people to the flooding around the metro and other areas. Rain is expected along the Missouri river again tonight and the 72-hour forecast continues to include rain.

Be sure to listen to the National Weather Service for critical flood information. Stay away from floodwaters. If you come upon a flowing stream where water is above your ankles, stop, turn around and go another way. Six inches of swiftly moving water can sweep you off of your feet.

If you come upon a flooded road while driving, turn around and go another way. If you are caught on a flooded road and waters are rising rapidly around you, get out of the car quickly and move to higher ground. Cars can be swept away by less than two feet of moving water. Be especially cautious at night when it is harder to recognize flood dangers.

A Bellevue man died Friday night after he drove into a rain-swollen ditch just south of Nebraska 370 and was swept away by floodwaters. Witnesses say the man was able to get out of his car but was pulled underwater, and rescue workers were unable to enter the water because the current was too strong.

Flood Information Links

<http://www.nema.ne.gov/newsroom/flooding-information.shtml>

<http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/flooding.aspx>

<http://www.ready.gov/floods>

<http://www.redcross.org/prepare/mobile-apps/flood>

Flood Stages from the National Weather Service

Missouri River, as of 2:30 p.m. Saturday, June 21, 2014

Verdel – 15.59 feet, flood stage is 24 feet

Niobrara – 13.85 feet, flood stage is 21 feet

S. Sioux City – 21.35 feet, flood stage is 30 feet

Decatur – 30.55 feet, flood stage is 35 feet

Blair – 26.44 feet, flood stage is 26.5 feet

Omaha – 27.28 feet, flood stage is 29 feet

Plattsmouth – 28.67 feet, flood stage is 26 feet

Nebraska City – 20.24 feet, flood stage is 18 feet

Brownville – 35.57 feet, flood stage is 33 feet

Rulo – 18.88 feet, flood stage is 17 feet (Emergency management is talking with people in the area about evacuation due to flooding.)

Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)

The NEMA field team and mobile emergency operations center in Pilger are working with emergency managers in the areas affected by storms. The State Emergency Operations Center in Lincoln is open. NEMA will continue to monitor river levels and participate in daily flood updates.

Additional information, photos, and videos can be found on the following NEMA sites:

<https://www.facebook.com/nema.page>, <http://www.youtube.com/user/TheNEMAtube>, and <https://twitter.com/NEMAtweets>

Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

Public water supplies — The communities of Thurston and Pilger are still under “boil water” alerts until further notice.

Behavioral Health issues — People experiencing stress can call Region IV Behavioral Health System’s office at (402) 370-3100 or the Rural Response Hotline at (800) 464-0258.

If people have **public health-related questions**, they can contact their local health department. Here is a link to a list of local health departments in the state:

<http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Documents/contacts.pdf>

Nebraska National Guard

Twenty Nebraska Army National Guard Soldiers from the 189th Transportation Company from Norfolk and Wayne continue to serve on State Active Duty, where they are assisting local officials in maintaining public safety in and around Pilger following Monday’s tornado. The Soldiers are working primarily at four entry control points leading into Pilger.

Wayne and Dixon County Updates

Persons who want to volunteer for tornado recovery in Wayne and Dixon County should report to the Wakefield Fire Hall, 405 Main St. between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. daily until further notice. Suggested minimum age of volunteers is 19 years, or bring parental consent if younger.

Cedar County Update

Cleanup efforts continue. Volunteer Reception Centers have been established in the communities of Coleridge and Laurel.

The Volunteer Reception Centers and hours are as follows:

Coleridge

- Check in at the Coleridge Community Center 111 S. Main St., Coleridge
- Crews plan to begin work at 8 a.m. and will work until late afternoon/early evening
- The Volunteer Reception Center will remain open on Saturday through 3 p.m.
- Transportation will be provided to areas to clean up. Please bring gloves and buckets.
- Sunday – Work will begin at 11 a.m. and last into the late afternoon/early evening hours. The Volunteer Reception Center will remain open through 4 p.m.

Laurel

- Check in at the Laurel-Concord Public School 502 Wakefield St
- Saturday June 21, 2014 Work will begin at 9 a.m. and last through the late afternoon/early evening.
- Sunday June 22, 2014 – Laurel Group Only – no planned volunteer effort on Sunday. The United Way of the Midlands will take calls from people who wish to volunteer but are not available this weekend.

In addition a hotline has been established to help match volunteers with those in need

- To volunteer call 2-1-1 or 866-813-1731 if outside the area.
- If in need of volunteers call (402) 283-9111 with details of need and where volunteers are needed.

Volunteers MUST be 18 years old. Wear work clothes and gloves. Busses will run as needed to transport volunteers and eliminate parking & traffic at farmsteads.

[https://www.facebook.com/pages/Cedar-County-NE-Emergency-](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Cedar-County-NE-Emergency-Management/114052811951504)

[Management/114052811951504](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Cedar-County-NE-Emergency-Management/114052811951504)

<https://www.facebook.com/ColeridgeAreaTornado2014>

<https://www.facebook.com/laurelne>

Wakefield

Volunteers assisting in cleanup should check in at the Wakefield Fire Hall at 405 Main St. between 9 a.m.-3 p.m. daily. Wear work clothes, long pants, and sturdy, closed-toed shoes. Volunteers need to be at least 19 years old or bring parental consent.

Call the hotline if you have donations or if you are a homeowner in need of assistance. The number is (402) 287-2574. Volunteers who have equipment or who can offer specialized skills, such as chainsaw and heavy equipment operation, or with trucks and trailers to haul debris, are asked to call the hotline, as well. Monetary donations may be taken to the United Way Fund through the Wayne and Wakefield area banks.

Red Cross

The Wisner shelter (housed in the Wisner-Pilger Junior-Senior High) will remain open until further notice. The shelter is unable to house pets, but the Red Cross has boarding options available to those in need. Health services are available for those dealing with lost medications, lost durable medical equipment, and to assist with injuries. Meals are being provided by the Salvation Army and Red Cross.

The Red Cross is also participating in the Multi-Agency Resource Center (MARC) that has been established at Wisner-Pilger High School. MARC provides an easy, one-stop shop atmosphere where affected families are able to visit with multiple agencies to receive a combination of services.

Volunteering

Nebraska Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NE VOAD) is coordinating with various organizations that are volunteering to assist. Some of the organizations currently providing on-the-ground assistance include Mennonite Disaster Service, World Renew, Noah's Canine Crisis Response Dogs, Red Cross, Team Rubicon, Christian Aid Ministries, Serve Nebraska, All Hands Volunteers, Southern Baptists, the Salvation Army, and Samaritan's Purse.

Volunteers may arrive at Wisner-Pilger Junior-Senior High, 801 18th St., at 6:30 a.m. to register. Registration for the day will end at 3 p.m. Volunteers must be at least 18 years of age. Volunteers will work in Pilger between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m. Volunteers must have a photo I.D. and will be bused in to Pilger and assigned groups to perform debris removal. Volunteers must check-in each day at the Wisner-Pilger Junior-Senior High – volunteers from a previous day will **NOT** be allowed into Pilger without going to the school first. Volunteers who arrive directly in Pilger will **NOT** be allowed to enter the town.

Donations

Monetary donations continue to be the best way to help citizens affected by the storm. Multiple funds have been established. **Please contact NEMA with additional fund information to be added to future news releases.**

Pilger financial donations can be made at any Midwest Bank branch, referencing the “Pilger Emergency Fund.” Checks may be mailed to:

Pilger Emergency Fund
Midwest Bank, Norfolk Branch
2501 West Benjamin Ave.
PO Box 886
Norfolk, NE 68702-0886

Donations for Six rural Stanton families can be made at the Stanton State Bank, referencing the “Stanton Tornado Relief Fund.” Checks may be mailed to:

Stanton Tornado Relief Fund
Stanton State Bank
PO Box 437
Stanton, NE 68779

Pilger and Stanton survivors, financial donations can be made at the Stanton State Bank, referencing the “Pilger/Stanton Tornado Relief Fund.” may be mailed to:

Pilger/Stanton Tornado Relief Fund
Stanton State Bank
PO Box 437
Stanton, NE 68779

Laurel Tornado Relief can be made at Security Bank, Laurel, 202 E. Second St., Laurel, NE 68745 during regular business hours.

Coleridge Tornado Relief can be made at Security Bank – Coleridge, 101 W Broadway, Coleridge, NE 68727 during regular business hours.

Those who would like to help by making a donation to **American Red Cross Disaster Relief** can do so by visiting www.redcross.org, calling 1-800-RED CROSS or texting the word REDCROSS to 90999 to make a \$10 donation.

A collection site for **material donations** (no clothes or shoes) has been set up at the Wisner Auditorium. This site will be open from June 22 to July 2. Items will be used by people directly affected by the storm.

Nebraska State Fire Marshal

State Fire Marshal, Jim Heine, has received inquiries from homeowners wishing to begin burning houses destroyed by the storm. He urged residents to contact their insurance agents before proceeding.

Fire Marshal staff continues to be available to perform damage assessment of commercial and residential structures. Contact the State Fire Marshal’s main office at 402-471-2027 for more information.

Nebraska Department of Agriculture

Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) Director Greg Ibach continues to encourage producers who suffered livestock losses to keep detailed records documenting those losses.

Producers are encouraged to contact their local Farm Service Agency (FSA) to determine what type of documentation might best fit their circumstances.

Ibach also encourages individuals who have sustained crop damage in recent weeks to share that information with their local Farm Service Agency for any federal programs that might be available.

Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ)

The Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ) has been visiting property owners in affected rural areas around Pilger and Wakefield. NDEQ is providing property owners with debris management guidance and reminding them to talk with their insurance companies before disposing of any materials.

Residents are encouraged to contact their local fire chief or emergency manager for specifics about debris removal policies in their local area. A wide selection of information regarding storm recovery can be found on NDEQ's website at <http://deq.ne.gov>. On that page, look for a link in the bottom right box labeled "Storm Recovery Environmental Guidance."

Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR)

Highway 15 remains closed from Highway 275 (north of Pilger) to Highway 32 (south of Pilger). U.S. Highway 275 is open, but people are advised not to stop or walk on the roadway.

Take extra care when traveling on Hwy 275. NPPD employees are working to replace downed power poles and power lines.

Nebraska Energy Office

The Nebraska Energy Office has monetary assistance available in all sectors to help finance energy efficient projects through the Dollar and Energy Savings Loan Program. Projects submitted in the affected areas will be expedited in support of the recovery efforts. Nebraska Energy Office staff is also available to provide free technical assistance related to energy efficiency code questions and blueprint reviews.

Please call the Nebraska Energy Office at 402.471.2867 or visit the Energy Office's website at <http://www.neo.ne.gov> for more information.

Nebraska State Patrol

The Nebraska State Patrol's (NSP) Mobile Command Post remains on scene with troopers continuing to provide security for Pilger. NSP is coordinating vehicular access to the community for residents and volunteers. NSP personnel continue to provide assets and resources as requested.

Nebraska Department of Insurance

The Nebraska Insurance Department offers these tips for individuals affected by recent storms:

- Contact your insurance company or agent as soon as you can.
- Take temporary measures to reduce further damage **but do not dispose of damaged property or make permanent repairs until your insurance company has inspected the damage**. Keep copies of expenses related to temporary repairs.
- If you need to relocate, keep receipts for your temporary living expenses.

- Maintain copies of all correspondence and take notes of your telephone conversations, including date and time of contact and name of person to whom you spoke.
- Obtain references, written estimates, proof of insurance and your insurance company's approval before authorizing a contractor to begin repairs.

If people have insurance-related questions or concerns, please call the Department of Insurance on its toll-free consumer hotline at 1-877-564-7323 or visit the Department's website at <http://www.doi.nebraska.gov>.

Nebraska Department of Revenue

The Nebraska Department of Revenue will work with businesses and individuals on any taxes due, including sales tax returns due June 20, 2014, if you do not have access to your computer, files, or tax records. The Department is also willing to abate penalties and interest.

Information is available online at revenue.nebraska.gov about what to do if your records are destroyed, temporary places of business, and real property valuations and damage due to natural disasters. If you are having difficulty filing returns or paying taxes that are due, please contact the Department for assistance at 800-742-7474.

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